

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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MR. SCARBOROUGH'S FAMILY.

BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXIX. RIDING HOME.

THE two old gentlemen rode away, each in his own direction, in gloomy silence. Not a word was said by either of them, even to one of his own followers. It was nearly twenty miles to Mr. Harkaway's house, and along the entire twenty miles he rode silent. "He's in an awful passion," said Thoroughbung; "he can't speak from anger." But, to tell the truth, Mr. Harkaway was ashamed of himself. He was an old gentleman, between seventy and eighty, who was supposed to go out for his amusement, and had allowed himself to be betrayed into most unseemly language. What though the hound had not "shown a line?" Was it necessary that he, at his time of life, should fight on the road for the maintenance of a trifling right of sport? But yet there came upon him from time to time a sense of the deep injury done to him. That man, Fairlawn, that blackguard, that creature of all others the furthest removed from a gentleman, had declared that in his, Mr. Harkaway's teeth, he would draw his, Mr. Harkaway's covert! Then he would urge on his old horse, and gnash his teeth; and then, again, he would be ashamed. "Tantœ animis caelestibus iræ!"

But Thoroughbung rode home high in spirits, very proud, and conscious of having done good work. He was always anxious to stand well with the hunt generally, and was aware that he had now distinguished himself. Harry Annesley was on one side of him, and on the other rode Mr. Florin, the banker. "He's an abominable liar," said Thoroughbung, "a wicked wretched liar!" He was alluding to the Hitchener's

whip, whom in his wrath he had nearly sent to another world. "He says that one of his hounds got into the covert, but I was there and saw it all. Not a nose was over the little bank which runs between the field and the covert."

"You must have seen a hound if he had been there," said the banker.

"I was as cool as a cucumber, and could count the hounds he had with him. There were three of them. A big black-spotted bitch was leading, the one that I nearly fell upon. When the man went down the hound stopped, not knowing what was expected of him. How should he? The man would have been in the covert, but, by George! I managed to stop him."

"What did you mean to do to him when you rode at him so furiously?" asked Harry.

"Not let him get in there. That was my resolute purpose. I suppose I should have knocked him off his horse with my whip."

"But suppose he had knocked you off your horse?" suggested the banker.

"There is no knowing how that might have been. I never calculated those chances. When a man wants to do a thing like that he generally does it."

"And you did it?" said Harry.

"Yes; I think I did. I dare say his bones are sore. I know mine are. But I don't care for that in the least. When this day comes to be talked about, as I dare say it will be for many a long year, no one will be able to say that the Hitcheners got into that covert." Thoroughbung, with the genuine modesty of an Englishman, would not say that he had achieved by his own prowess all this glory for the Puckeridge Hunt; but he felt it down to the very end of his nails. Had he not been there that whip would have got into the wood, and a

very different tale would then have been told in those coming years to which his mind was running away with happy thoughts. He had ridden the aggressors down; he had stopped the first intrusive hound. But though he continued to talk of the subject, he did not boast in so many words that he had done it. His "veni vidi vici" was confined to his own bosom.

As they rode home together there came to be a little crowd of men round Thoroughbung, giving him the praises that were his due. But one by one they fell off from Annesley's side of the road. He soon felt that no one addressed a word to him. He was, probably, too prone to encourage them in this. It was he that fell away, and courted loneliness, and then in his heart accused them. There was no doubt something of truth in his accusations; but another man less sensitive, might have lived it down. He did more than meet their coldness half way, and then complained to himself of the bitterness of the world. "They are like the beasts of the field," he said, "who when another beast has been wounded, turn upon him and rend him to death." His future brother-in-law, the best-natured fellow that ever was born, rode on thoughtless, and left Harry alone for three or four miles, while he received the pleasant plaudits of his companions. In Joshua's heart was that tale of the whip's discomfiture. He did not see that Molly's brother was alone as soon as he would have done but for his own glory. "He is the same as the others," said Harry to himself. "Because that man has told a falsehood of me, and has had the wit to surround it with circumstances, he thinks it becomes him to ride away and cut me." Then he asked himself some foolish questions as to himself and as to Joshua Thoroughbung, which he did not answer as he should have done, had he remembered that he was then riding Thoroughbung's horse, and that his sister was to become Thoroughbung's wife.

After half an hour of triumphant ovation, Joshua remembered his brother-in-law, and did fall back so as to pick him up. "What's the matter, Harry? Why don't you come on and join us?"

"I'm sick of hearing of that infernal squabble."

"Well; as to a squabble, Mr. Harkaway behaved quite right. If a hunt is to be kept up, the right of entering coverts must be preserved for the hunt they belong to. There was no line shown. You must

remember that there isn't a doubt about that. The hounds were all astray when we joined them. It's a great question whether they brought their fox into that first covert. There are they who think that Bodkin was just riding across the Puckeridge country in search of a fox." Bodkin was Mr. Fairlawn's huntsman. "If you admit that kind of thing, where will you be? As a hunting county just nowhere. Then as a sportsman, where are you? It is necessary to put down such gross fraud. My own impression is that Mr. Fairlawn should be turned out from being master. I own I feel very strongly about it. But then I always have been fond of hunting."

"Just so," said Harry sulkily, who was not in the least interested as to the matter on which Joshua was so eloquent.

Then Mr. Proctor rode by, the gentleman who in the early part of the day had disgusted Harry by calling him "mister."

"Now, Mr. Proctor," continued Joshua, "I appeal to you whether Mr. Harkaway was not quite right? If you won't stick up for your rights in a hunting county—" But Mr. Proctor rode on, wishing them good-night, very discourteously declining to hear the remainder of the brewer's arguments. "He's in a hurry, I suppose," said Joshua.

"You'd better follow him. You'll find that he'll listen to you then."

"I don't want him to listen to me particularly."

"I thought you did." Then for half a mile the two men rode on in silence.

"What's the matter with you, Harry?" said Joshua. "I can see there's something up that riles you. I know you're a Fellow of your college, and have other things to think of besides the vagaries of a fox."

"The Fellow of a college!" said Harry, who, had he been in a good humour, would have thought much more of being along with a lot of fox-hunters than of any college honours.

"Well, yes, I suppose it is a great thing to be a Fellow of a college. I never could have been one if I had mugged for ever."

"My being a Fellow of a college won't do me much good. Did you see that old man Proctor go by just now?"

"Oh yes; he never likes to be out after a certain hour."

"And did you see Florin, and Mr. Harkaway, and a lot of others? You yourself have been going on ahead for the last hour without speaking to me."

"How do you mean, without speaking to you?" said Joshua, turning sharp round.

Then Harry Annesley reflected that he was doing an injustice to his future brother-in-law. "Perhaps I have done you wrong," he said.

"You have."

"I beg your pardon. I believe you are as honest and true a fellow as there is in Hertfordshire, but for those others——"

"You think it's about Mountjoy Scarborough, then?" asked Joshua.

"I do. That infernal fool, Peter Prosper, has chosen to publish to the world that he has dropped me because of something that he has heard of that occurrence. A wretched lie has been told with a purpose by Mountjoy Scarborough's brother, and my uncle has taken it into his wise head to believe it. The truth is, I have not been as respectful to him as he thinks I ought, and now he resents my neglect in this fashion. He is going to marry your aunt in order that he may have a lot of children, and cut me out. In order to justify himself, he has told these lies about me, and you see the consequence. Not a man in the county is willing to speak to me."

"I really think a great deal of it's fancy."

"You go and ask Mr. Harkaway. He's honest, and he'll tell you. Ask this new cousin of yours, Mr. Prosper."

"I don't know that they are going to make a match of it, after all."

"Ask my own father. Only think of it;—that a puling puking idiot like that, from a mere freak, should be able to do a man such a mischief! He can rob me of my income, which he himself has brought me up to expect. That he can do by a stroke of his pen. He can threaten to have sons like Priam. All that is within his own bosom. But to justify himself to the world at large, he picks up a scandalous story from a man like Augustus Scarborough, and immediately not a man in the county will speak to me. I say that that is enough to break a man's heart,—not the injury done which a man should bear, but the injustice of the doing. Who wants his beggarly allowance? He can do as he likes about his own money. I shall never ask him for his money. But that he should tell such a lie as this about the county is more than a man can endure."

"What was it that did happen?" asked Joshua.

"The man met me in the street when he was drunk, and he struck at me and was

insolent. Of course I knocked him down. Who wouldn't have done the same? Then his brother found him somewhere, or got hold of him, and sent him out of the country, and says that I had held my tongue when I left him in the street. Of course I held my tongue. What was Mountjoy to me? Then Augustus has asked me sly questions, and accuses me of lying because I did not choose to tell him everything. It all comes out of that."

Here they had reached the rectory, and Harry, after seeing that the horses were properly supplied with gruel, took himself and his ill-humour upstairs to his own chamber. But Joshua had a word or two to say to one of the inmates of the rectory. He felt that it would be improper to ride his horse home without giving time to the animal to drink his gruel, and therefore made his way into the little breakfast-parlour, where Molly had a cup of tea and buttered toast ready for him. He of course told her first of the grand occurrence of the day,—how the two packs of hounds had mixed themselves together, how violently the two masters had fallen out and had nearly flogged each other, how Mr. Harkaway had sworn horribly,—who had never been heard to swear before,—how a final attempt had been made to seize a second covert, and how, at last, it had come to pass that he had distinguished himself. "Do you mean to say that you absolutely rode over the unfortunate man?" asked Molly.

"I did. Not that the man had the worst of it,—or very much the worse. There we were both down, and the two horses, all in a heap together."

"Oh, Joshua, suppose you had been kicked!"

"In that case I should have been—kicked."

"But a kick from an infuriated horse!"

"There wasn't much infuriation about him. The man had ridden all that out of the beast."

"You are sure to laugh at me, Joshua, because I think what terrible things might have happened to you. Why do you go putting yourself so forward in every danger now that you have got somebody else to depend upon you and to care for you? It's very, very wrong."

"Somebody had to do it, Molly. It was most important, in the interests of hunting generally, that those hounds should not have been allowed to get into that covert. I don't think that outsiders ever understand how essential it is to maintain your

rights. It isn't as though it were an individual. The whole county may depend upon it."

"Why shouldn't it be some man who hasn't got a young woman to look after?" said Molly, half laughing and half crying.

"It's the man who first gets there who ought to do it," said Joshua. "A man can't stop to remember whether he has got a young woman or not."

"I don't think you ever want to remember." Then that little quarrel was brought to the usual end with the usual blandishments, and Joshua went on to discuss with her that other source of trouble, her brother's fall. "Harry is awfully cut up," said the brewer.

"You mean these affairs about his uncle?"

"Yes. It isn't only the money he feels, or the property, but people look askew at him. You ought all of you to be very kind to him."

"I am sure we are."

"There is something in it to vex him. That stupid old fool, your uncle——; I beg your pardon, you know, for speaking of him in that way."

"He is a stupid old fool."

"Is behaving very badly. I don't know whether he shouldn't be treated as I did that fellow up at the covert."

"Ride over him?"

"Something of that kind. Of course Harry is sore about it, and when a man is sore he frets at a thing like that more than he ought to do. As for that aunt of mine at Buntingford, there seems to be some hitch in it. I should have said she'd have married The Old Gentleman had he asked her."

"Don't talk like that, Joshua."

"But there is some screw loose. Simpson came up to my father about it yesterday, and the governor let enough of the cat out of the bag to make me know that the thing is not going as straight as she wishes."

"He has offered then?"

"I am sure he has asked her."

"And your aunt will accept him?" asked Molly.

"There's probably some difference about money. It's all done with the intention of injuring poor Harry. If he were my own brother I could not be more unhappy about him. And as to Aunt Matilda, she's a fool. They are two fools together. If they choose to marry we can't hinder them. But there is some screw loose, and if the two young lovers don't know their own mind

things may come right at last." Then, with some further blandishments, the prosperous brewer walked away.

TWICE ACROSS THE CHANNEL WHEN CHARLES WAS KING.

SECONDLY—TO JERSEY AND GUERNSEY.

In beginning his account of his second Channel trip Heylyn says: "My Survey of the Estate of the two Islands of Guernsey and Jersey is fashioned after a more serious and solemn manner. I had then begun to apply myself to the Lord Bishop of London, and was resolved to present the work to him when it was once finished, and, therefore, was to frame my style agreeably unto the gravity and composedness of so great a Prelate."

Again: "At Court . . . at the time I had finished these Relations," meaning his "lively" account of his French holiday, "the French party there were as considerable for their number as it was afterwards for their power," necessitating that a Discourse should trip along to a step that would please the party; but now, as the object was to address a powerful prelate, a "discourse fashioned with so much liberty, and touching (as it might be thought) with so much Gayete de cœur upon the humours of that"—the French—"people, might have procured me no good welcome." From which it followed that, "The indiscretion would have been unpardonable if I had come before such a person in so light a garb as might have given him a just occasion to suppose that I had too much of the Antick, and might be rather serviceable to his recreations than to be honoured with employments of more weight and consequence."

Now that the change in style that will be perceived is thus well accounted for, we may accompany Heylyn in his survey of the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey.

It is remembered that Lord Danvers (to be Earl of Danby) spoke commendatorily of Peter Heylyn to Prince Charles in 1623. Five years afterwards, the good opinion that brought out the commendation bore fruit of another kind. The earl was Governor of Jersey. Heylyn, immediately after his Normandy Relations, had written some theological Latin pamphlets that Prideaux, King's Professor of Divinity, and Reynolds, Warden of Merton, denounced, preaching of his Bellarminianism, his Pontificalianism, his heresies of all sorts that had led to the narrow party proclaiming him a Papist in the Public Divinity School; and as

this happened just before Heylyn had resolved to show the Bishop of London (Laud) that he was not an antick, it was at a moment when, if patrons were going to do anything for him, their opportunity was come, since he was absolutely without any preferment whatever, and if a post could be proposed or procured for him, he was ready at once to make himself and the post fit. At this juncture, "On provocation Given unto the French at the Isle of Rhe," in Heylyn's own words, "the king received advertisement of some reciprocal affront intended by the French on the Isles of Jarsey and Guernzey with others therupon appendant," such isles being "the only remainders of the Dukedom of Normandy in the power of the English." As a result of the "advertisement," "it was thought good to send the Earl of Danby with a considerable supply of Men and Armes, and Ammunition to make good those Islands by fortifying and assuring them against all invasions." "And this order being signified to his Lordship about the beginning of December, anno 1628, he cheerfully embraced the service, and prepared accordingly. But," which is the spot at which Heylyn's history gets intertwined with the governor's, and the islands', and the life of England herself—the earl "being deserted by his own Chaplaines in regard of the extremity of the season, and the visible danger of the Enterprise, he proposed the businesse of that attendance unto me (not otherwise relating to him than as to an honourable friend)," and in "me he found as great a readiness and resolution as he found coldnesse in the other."

Towards the end of February Heylyn set out from town, where he had had to stay over Christmas, to wait for his patron down in Hampshire, near the port of embarkation. The rendezvous was "at the house of Mr. Arthur Brumfield, in the Parish of Tichfield near the sea, situate between Portsmouth and Southampton;" and there Heylyn and all were entertained handsomely for a week, with even then the need "to tarry" two or three days longer for the arrival of some missing men and ammunition. The result was that it was a Tuesday, the 3rd of March (the year being 1628), when the Assurance, "a ship of eight hundred tun, furnished with forty-two pieces of Ordnance," with "four hundred foot, under Colonel Pipernell, Lieut. Colonel Francis Connisby, Lieut. Colonel Francis Rainford, and Captain William Killegra," the ship being "very

well manned with valiant and expert sailors," was pronounced to be ready to sail, and received the governor and his staff on board. Ready also was a "Fleet," under Admiral Sir Henry Palmer, "of two Pinnaces called the Whelps, a Catch called the Minnakin, and a Merchants ship called the Charles;" and the five sail set off at once, when "the sea was very calme and quiet," producing "a sickly and unpleasant movement," and when, after acquaintance had been made with "the Needles, a dangerous passage at all times, . . . we were fain to lie at Hull (as the Mariners phrase it) all that night." Excitement was not many knots off, however. The watch "descried a sail of French," near by, at daylight. It consisted "of ten barks laden with very good Gascoigne wines and good choyce of Linen," and "our two Whelps and the Catch gave chase unto them." The pursuit was hot, and the chances of the game were seized with excellent advantage. "Never," says Heylyn, "did Duck by frequent diving so escape the Spaniell, or did Hare by often turning so avoid the Hounds," as did these French skippers slip from the Englishmen, and slip, and slip again. Finally there was no capture. The Whelps and the spaniels, the ducks, and hares, and hounds, all seem to have moored close together finally, in peace and good temper (when it was that the very goodness of the wine, and the nice assortment of linen, had acceptable demonstration, possibly); for Heylyn makes known that, in the "Ilands," "by an antient priviledge of the Kings of England, . . . lawfull it is both for French men or for others, how hot soever the war be followed in other parts, to repair hither without danger, and here to trade in all security;" and most likely the diving and the turning were done till the "hither" was gained.

"Jersey, Guernzey, and the Isles Appendant," being now able to be surveyed, and get a "Discourse," or "Relations," the business—after the serious and solemn manner suitable to the gravity and composedness of Laud—began by going "on shoar in the Bay of St. Heliers," on the Friday. Heylyn took a little rest after landing; for "you need not think but that sleep and a good Bed were welcome to us, after so long and ill a passage;" but the next morning the note-book was in hand, and something was dotted down about Alderney. "A great quantity of this little Island is overlaid

with sand, driven thither by the fury of the North-west wind; the soil is indifferently rich both for husbandry and grasing ;” still, “the aire is healthy, though sometimes thickened with the vapours arising from the sea ;” and “a Town it hath of well-near an hundred families.”* Sark—the fee-farm of which belonged to the De Carterets, as the fee-farm of Alderney had been given to the Chamberlains—is “an isle not known at all by any name among the Antients, and no marvail, for till the fifth of Queene Elizabeth or thereabouts it was not peopled.” After that, “it contained only a poor hermitage, together with a little Chappell,” whereas “to-day”—only a quarter of a century after Elizabeth’s reign was over—“it may contain some forty housholds.” “Garnzey, or Guernzey,” possessed a feature that at once gained for it Heylyn’s favour. It had “a Lake . . . neer unto the sea, of about a mile or more in compasse, exceeding well stored with Carpes, the best that ever mortall eye beheld for tast and bignesse.” The triangular shape of the island was noted also : “Each side about nine miles.” It was observed to have a splendid harbour and castle, some witches, twenty thousand inhabitants, two thousand of them able men, only “but poorly weaponed.” It was observed to be divided into ten parishes ; due note was made that St. Peter’s, one of them, has “a fair and safe peer adjoyning to it for the benefit of their merchants, being honoured also with a Market and the Plaidery, or Court of Justice ;” and it was discovered that the “principall commodity” which the people “use to send abroad are the works and labours of the poorer sort, as Wast-cotes, Stockins, and other manufactures made of Wool, wherein they are exceeding cunning.” The Guernsey people were exceeding sociable and generous also, wherein they differed agreeably from the Jersey people, who were, “by reason of their continual toyle and labour, not a little affected to a kinde of melancholy surlinesse incident to ploughmen.” “In all Guernzey I did not see one beggar” is Heylyn’s report ; but in Jersey “the children are continually craving almes of every stranger.” Jersey took the lead of Guernsey, however, in the matter of field-walls. These,

at Guernsey, are stones, which, says Heylyn, may be good defence—defence being the Earl of Danby’s mission, there must be remembrance, and his lordship’s chaplain being quite sure to hear the matter diligently canvassed. But, at Jersey, land was found divided by “Ditches and Banks of earth cast up, well fenced, and planted with several sorts of apples, out of which they make a pleasing kind of Sider, which is their ordinary drink.” Out of which, taking the apples for a leading item, it is easy to make a pleasing kind of view of Jersey as it was when Heylyn saw it. “The Country,” he says, is “exceeding pleasant and delightsome ;” it is “generally swelling up in pretty hillocks, under which lie pleasant Vallies, and those plentifully watered with dainty Rils or Riverets.” The air is “very healthy and little disposed unto diseases, unlesse it be unto a kinde of Ague in the end of Harvest, which they call Les Settembers.” The island, in “the figure of it, will hold proportion with that long kind of square which the Geometricians call Oblongum.” And it has, to enjoy all this, “thirty thousand living souls.”

A fine and bold feature in Heylyn’s landscape comes also from this : “On an high and craggy rock is a most strong Castle called by an haughty name, Mount Orgueil.” Jersey’s drawback, though, is that “the countrey is yet so small in the extent and circuit it is an abridgment only of the greater works of nature.” And not only Heylyn, but the governor, his master, discovered a great and peculiar difficulty in this : “My Lord of Danby,” it is written down, “seemed to wonder how such a span of earth could contain such multitudes of people.”

“When first I undertook to attend upon my Lord of Danby to the Islands of Guernzey and Jarsey,” was an introductory declaration of Heylyn’s, as he was entering into a branch of his Discourse certain to be of the closest interest to Bishop Laud, “besides the purpose which I had of doing service to his Lordship, I resolved also to do somewhat for myself, and if possible somewhat unto the places.” It was comprehensive ; it was candid. Actuated by it, “I applyed my self,” continues Heylyn, “to make enquirie after their form of Government, in which, I must needs confesse, I met with much which did exceedingly affect me. . . . The grand customarie of Normandy is of most credit with them, and that

* According to L’Annuaire Hamonet (1880), a Guide, in French, for the French living under English rule, its population now is two thousand four hundred and fifty, exclusive of the garrison. Sark possesses five hundred and fifty inhabitants.

indeed the only rule by which they are directed ; save that in some few passages it hath been altered by our Prince, for the conveniency of this people." There follow many instances of the prevailing "customarie," of course. It was carried on by governors, bailiffs, ministers, justices ; lists are given of all who had held office since 1301, in which lists there occur names so well known as L'Emprière, Brasdefer, De Carteret, Pawlet, Herault, De Sausmarez, De Longueville ; some of the measurements are noted (for example, "an acre of their measure is fortie Perches long and one in breadth, every Perche being twenty-one foot"); and such tithes as "French Querrui" and "Champart" get thorough definition. Querrui, "the taking of the eight and nine sheafe," is, says Heylyn, "as I conceive from the French word Charrue, which signifieth a Plough;" it means "as much as Plough-right, alluding to the custom of some Lords in France, who used to give their Husbandmen or Villains, as a guerdon for their toyle, the eight and nine of their increase." Champart is "the part reserved for the Lord unto himself;" double Champart, or the Champart du Roy, being the part belonging to the king ; and it is obtained by "the Farmer, in his counting of his sheafes, casting aside the ten"—which is the Champart du Roy—"for the King, and the twelve, which is the Champart, for the Lord."

"Widowes," Heylyn found, "which are mindful to re-marry, shall not be permitted to contract themselves untill six moneths after the decease of their dead husbands ;" when even then they "shall owe so much respect unto their Parents as not to marry again without their leave." Children were not to be baptised by "such names as were used in the time of Paganism ;" not meaning, says Heylyn, "such names as occur in Poets, as Hector, Hercules, etc."—since—"names of this sort occure frequently in S. Pauls Epistles ;" but meaning the "names of Idols—the names of office, as Angell, Baptist, Apostle"—the names that "formerly have been in use amongst our ancestors as Richard, Edmund, William, and the like."* Burials were to be conducted with

* This seems incredible. But Heylyn, to support his assertion, relates how "our great contriver Snape," even here in England, refused to baptise the child of "one Hodkinson of Northampton" by the name of Richard. He demanded another name in the place of it, as he stood resolutely at the font ; and on the godfather, with equal resolution, refusing, Snape "forsook the place, and the childe was carried back unchristened."

neither "a Sermon, nor Prayers, nor sound of Bell, nor any other ceremony whatsoever." Deacons were to "take order that the poor may be relieved without begging . . . and that young men fit for labour be set unto some occupation." Churches, "being dedicated to God's service," were to be kept for God's service ; never were "Civill Courts to be there holden ;" yet there were "multitudes of lawyers" in Jersey. "This people conceiving rightly that multitudes of Lawyers occasion multitudes of businesse, that, according to that merry saying of old Haywood, 'The more spaniels in the field, the more game' ;"—and where, if only St. Peters, at Guernsey, were "honoured" by a Plaidery or Court of Justice, were the most of the Channel lawyers to meet, to enjoy their law ? Persons intending "to be communicants were to abjure the Pope, the Masse, and all Superstition and Idolatry," though they might not yet "be administered unto when they were walking," as the Synodists of the Netherlands permitted, making Heylyn cry out : "A stiff and stubborn generation, and stiffer in the hams then any Elephant ! I had before heard sometimes of ambling Communions, but till I met with that Epitome, I could not stumble on the meaning." At churches, "The People being assembled before Sermon, there shall be read a Chapter out of the Canonickal books of Scripture only, and not of the Apocrypha, and it shall be read by one . . . of honest conversation." In the churches, Heylyn looked round, and found them "naked of all Monuments, with not so much as the blazon of an Armes permitted in a window, for fear, as I conjecture, of Idolatry ;" and, of course, the sum of the whole meant what came afterwards to be called Puritanism, and what was abhorrent to Heylyn's very soul.

"We desire also that prophanie glasse windows whose superstitious paint makes many Idolators, may be humbled and dashed in pieces against the ground, for our conscience tells us that they are Diabolical, and the father of Darknesse was the inventer of them, being the chiefe Patron to damnable pride. . . .

"We desire also that Bishops may have no more foure corner caps, but let them be tryangle, to put them in mind, if they affect not reformation, Tyburne will be their portion. . . .

"We desire . . . that surplices may not be suffered, for why ? the Clergie be growne so proud of late that forsooth they

must have them starched, to the great prejudice of the lilly-white hands of good-customed Landrasses, which upon Sabbath dayes are covered with neither lincie, nor woolecie, but well-glossed satin gownes.

"We desire. . . ."

Much else; this being part of the impetuous petition of "above twelve thousand of the Weamen of Middlesex," which, "that Males may not seeme to be more religious then Females," they would have "bin bold to present unto you all," only that friends advised them to hold it back, "untill it should please God to endue them with more wit and lesse Non-sence." And it comes in well here, because it is an embodiment of the spirit which Heylyn saw abroad in the Channel Islands, and which struck him with so much dismay. It was not new in those places either. In the previous reign, when "two Companies of Souldiers were distributed" over "Guernzey," Heylyn was told, "such was the peevish obstinacy of one of the Ministers" of that island, that though at last "on much entreaty," he allowed the soldiers' minister "to read prayers unto them in his Church, at such times when himself and people did not use it," it was with "expresse condition that he should not either read the Litany or administer the Communion;" and, these "Companies of Souldiers" being still in residence in 1628 (James's reign only just three years before ended), Heylyn saw for himself that "as often as they purpose to receive the Sacrament, they have been compelled to ferry over to the Castle" . . . at Jersey . . . "and in the great hall there, celebrate the holy Supper." Further: This anticipatory Puritanism was not new in the islands, even then. The Whole Body of the Discipline, from which Heylyn quotes, was revived in a "Forme" dated October, 1597, from a Forme that had been drawn up in a synod held in Guernsey in 1576; and this had been preceded by what Heylyn styles an "improvident assent," opening a pernicious "gap unto the Brethren," granted on the seventh of August, 1565, by Elizabeth. It was a queenly document, too, judging by its queenly terms. It says: "The Queen's most excellent Majesty understandeth that the Isles of Garnzey and Jarsey . . . have a minister which ever since his arrivall in Jarsey hath used the like order of Preaching and Administration as . . . is used in the French Church in London." Now, "her Highness is well pleased to admit the same

order of Preaching and Administration to be continued at St. Heliers . . . Provided always that the residue of the Parishes in the said Isle shall diligently put apart all superstitions used in the said Diocese." And when the license ends "And so, Fare you well, From Richmond," being subscribed "N. Bacon, Will. Northampton, R. Leicester, Gal. Clynton, R. Rogers, F^r Knols, William Cecil," it shows itself a license beautifully calm, for the hot time in which it was issued, and it brings real admiration. Peter Heylyn, however, was in the midst of the fight, having no power there to breathe freely. He was full of the bold and audacious spirit, as Anthony à Wood calls it, which made him selected by-and-by, by Laud, to collect "the scandalous points out of Prynne's books;" which made him offend Prideaux again, so that he once more spoke publicly against him with so much malignity "it fetcht a great hum from the Country Ministers present." He was full of the spirit that made him offend Hakewill, who said of him: "The condition of the man is such that what he saith does not matter, as his word hardly passeth either for commendation or slander," so "conceited and pragmaticall" was he, so "bold and undaunted." He was full of that spirit which made him offend his own parishioners at Alresford, by removing the communion-table from the middle of the church to the east end; which made him follow the king to Oxford, and edit, in turns with Birkenhead, the Mercurius Aulicus; which made him voted a delinquent in the House of Commons, and resulted in the sequestration of his goods, with his "incomparable Library," and all that he possessed; and it followed that to him, when he was making his "survey" of Guernzey and Jarsey, the particular departure that he saw there from his own particular orthodoxy did not seem deserving of the toleration it had obtained, that it was a pain to find it so well established and ratified, and that he conveyed the news of it to Laud, aroused and astounded.

To get out of it, to get home, was his best enjoyment, at the time. He had to conform somewhat, theologically, with what he found at Jersey to conform with. Thus, he had to preach in the "naked" church where the brethren, who had had the "gap" opened for them, read straightly from the "Canonicall Books;" but he ordered them to have very early service, so that he might have his at nine o'clock; and he then used the Liturgy "according to the

Prescript form of the Church of England." Also, he had to conform to the time and tide that he found ruling it at Jersey, "the crossnesse of the winds and the roughnesse of the water" having "detained us some days longer in Castle Cornet than we had intended;" but even this yielded at last, and "on Maunday Thursday, anno 1629, we went aboard our ships, and hoised sail for England." Arrived at home, "I testifie before the Altar," cries Heylyn, "the grateful acknowledgment of a safe voyage and a prosperous return, blessings which I never merited;" and some of his joy breaks out in this fashion :

Hail, thou sweet England! may I breathe my last
In thy lov'd armes, and when my dayes are past,
And to the silence of the grave I must.
All I desire is thou wouldest keep my dust.

So England did. He was buried in Westminster, in 1662, after the king had been executed; after Laud had been executed; after he had himself wandered about a fugitive; after he had been rewarded for the gravity of his Jersey survey by an appointment as King's Chaplain; after he had been made Prebend of Westminster, and Rector of Henningford, and Vicar of Houghton-le-Spring, and all his glory, and all his quarrelsome ness, and all his despair had died out, and he was only a simple old divine, toiling on at his daily task, white-headed and blind. In his day he had written tragedies, comedies, histories, essays, discourses, answers, narrations, relations, views, letters, sermons, pamphlets, catechisms, observations, justifications, declarations, tracts; he had translated other men's works by the score; and then there comes this little note of him in Evelyn's Diary, March 29th, 1661 : "Dr. Heylyn (author of the Geography) preach'd at the Abbey concerning Friendship and Charitie. He was, I think, at this time, quite darke, and so had been for some yeares." It was the happy and, as Royalists thought, permanent Restoration time; and no more touching moment can be chosen for taking a last look at Peter Heylyn than when, the year before his death, he was glorying in the return of the son of his king, and was standing there in Westminster Abbey to do it, with his sightless eyes.

ON MATRIMONY AND MATCH-MAKING.

IT is recorded of an ancient sage that, on being asked at what period of his life a man ought to marry, he replied: "When he is young, it is too soon; when old, it is

too late." Discouraging as such an answer may be considered, it still leaves the question open as far as middle-aged individuals are concerned; whereas the matrimonial aspirations of these, as well as of juvenile and "hors d'âge" would-be Benedicks are summarily and uncompromisingly checked by the oft-quoted prohibitory monosyllable, "Don't!" That marriage is a lottery more suggestive of blanks than prizes is, we believe, generally allowed; and the possibility of this drawback being admitted, it would be unreasonable to blame the candidate for the happy state if he looks before he leaps, and weighs well the pros and cons of the undertaking ere he irrecoverably commits himself. Everyone is not so fortunate in his choice as the painter Charlet, who tells us that on his first interview with the damsel destined to become his wife, he found her engaged in the homely but practical employment of darning stockings. "Mine are always in holes," he reflected, and this reminiscence of bachelor discomfort decided the matter; he proposed, was accepted, and, as he conscientiously adds, "never had cause to regret it."

The uncertainty, indeed, attending the process of selection is sufficient of itself to deter many from embarking on so hazardous a venture, and the visions of connubial bliss, in which most people have at some period or other indulged, are apt to lose much of their brightness as the moment draws near for realising them. It is, moreover, a melancholy fact that young men of the present day are less impulsive and more calculating than—if traditional reports are to be credited—they formerly were, and are rarely inclined to barter their liberty except for a proportionate "quid pro quo." Love in a cottage has long been an exploded myth, and the pleasant fallacy, that where one can dine two can, only requires a few months' trial to be at once and for ever disproved. We are gradually—although not perhaps without protest—adopting the usage in vogue among our neighbours across the Channel, and accustoming ourselves to regard matrimony as an "affair" not to be entered upon lightly, but demanding the fullest and most mature deliberation; like Talleyrand, we are inclined to distrust first impressions, although not precisely for the reason alleged by that astute diplomatist. Many young men who willingly succumb to the attraction of a pretty face, and plunge unhesitatingly into an flirtation on every avail-

able opportunity, yet, however closely they may flutter round the candle, take especial care not to burn their wings; while on their side the fair ladies, we may be sure, are equally cautious as to the amount of encouragement they may safely venture to bestow. For it would be doing them injustice to suppose for a moment that they are a whit less well-informed respecting the social status and financial position of their admirers than are the latter with regard to theirs; and even were a girl—such things will occasionally happen—to accord more than a stray dance to some handsome but penniless “detrimental,” on the plea of his being the best waltzer in the room, is not her chaperon there to whisper a timely word of warning, and keep a sharp look-out on the offender?

This being the actual state of things—and that it is so, few, we imagine, will be disposed to deny—would it be so very surprising if there were no marriages at all? Such a deplorable contingency might possibly arrive, if the parties concerned were left to their own devices, and entirely dependent on their inclination or ability to bring matters to a satisfactory issue; but at this critical juncture the tutelary priestess of Hymen, in other words the match-maker, steps in, and smooths the way to a conclusive settlement of the difficulty. When we read in the Morning Post or Court Journal that a marriage has been arranged between Lord Fitz-Ararat and Miss Pamela Geldwechsel, only daughter and heiress of Ezra Geldwechsel Esquire, of Lothbury and Mayfair, we may be morally certain that some match-making duenna has had a finger in the pie; and by her persuasive reasoning has induced the notoriously imprudent patrician to regard with a favourable eye the somewhat shadily-acquired dowry of his affianced bride. Without her aid, he would in all human probability have continued to vegetate on an income barely sufficient for his “button-holes” and cigarettes; while Miss Pamela, notwithstanding her half-million, would in equal likelihood have for ever remained outside that social pale, beyond which for an unaccredited parvenu there is no passing. We may therefore fairly assume that, as society is at present constituted, such promoters of matrimony are not only useful but indispensable; and in proof of the assertion may be excused for examining how successfully a similar system, carried on, it is true, far more extensively

and methodically than with us, is acknowledged to work in France.

There, a girl who remains single up to the age of five-and-twenty may be looked upon almost as an anomaly; even the least attractive regarding their establishment in life not merely as a probable eventuality, but as a matter of course. When scarcely in her teens, her future prospects have been already discussed, and her “expectancies” accurately calculated by that mysterious but influential Vehmgericht, the family council; suggestions from its different members as to the corresponding advantages she is entitled to demand have been carefully listened to and considered, and the names of such of their friends and acquaintance as may ultimately supply the requisite son-in-law duly registered. When the time for action arrives, negotiations are opened on all sides, not only by the mother and other female relatives, but also by whatever sympathising “commère”—and they are legion—they can contrive to enlist in their behalf; and thanks to their united efforts the young lady, whose consent to this arbitrary disposal of her person is regarded as a foregone conclusion, finds herself in an incredibly short space of time betrothed to a comparative stranger, whom she has perhaps met twice in her life before, and complacently accepting as her legitimate due the traditional bouquet which, during the dreary interval between the signature of the contract and the marriage ceremony, it is his daily privilege to offer her. When once the knot is tied, and the newly-linked couple are fairly despatched on their wedding tour, the professional match-maker’s occupation is for the nonce at an end, and she calmly washes her hands as to the result of the “arrangement.” Yet, strange though it may seem, such marriages usually turn out remarkably well; and even in cases where a complete accordance of tastes and dispositions is wanting, both parties are, as a rule, disposed to make the best of an indifferent bargain, and, however cordially they may disagree at home, take especial care that the world knows nothing about it.

With us, the process of match-making is somewhat different, inasmuch as the damsel herself has a voice—and a very decisive one—in the matter. The days are gone by, if they ever existed, when daughters were dragged to the altar, and compelled to sacrifice their inclinations to family interests or parental authority. In these enlightened

times every one of them knows that she is at liberty to choose her own husband, and, it is but doing her justice to add, is perfectly equal to the occasion. She may, and often does, give her hand where her heart is not, and thus swells the list of ill-assorted alliances which too frequently terminate in the divorce court; but whether this step be motived by cupidity or ambition, she takes it of her own free will, and, whatever may be the result, has nobody to blame for it but herself. Being thoroughly versed in all the intricate mysteries of those popular manuals, the Peerage, Baronetage, and County Families, and consequently forearmed against the possibility of confounding the wrong Simon Pure with the right one, she enters on her campaign with the two-fold advantage of knowing exactly what she wants, and of being determined not to rest until she has got it. There are drawbacks in the way, of course: rival beauties to encounter and vanquish, and inopportune flirtations to resist; she must constantly keep her eye on the main chance, and remorselessly throw over young Sabretasche of the Blues, who waltzes like a Viennese, but has nothing save debts and his pay, in favour of the stiff and ungainly Lord Hillendale, who has not two ideas in his head, but is incomparably the best match in the room.

When the desired impression is made, and the victim is fairly in the toils, what is her next move? Simply to secure him an invitation to the country-house of one of her intimates, where she herself will be a fixture during the autumn; and where, with the judicious co-operation of the châtelaine, who is always ready to aid and abet on such occasions, she may reasonably hope to bring him to book. For it is an undoubted fact that more marriages are "arranged" in these favoured latitudes than anywhere else; the opportunities offered of throwing people together are endless, and she must be indeed a novice who neglects to profit by them. Five o'clock tea, lawn-tennis, and private theatricals, not to mention the seductive dawdlings in the conservatory and lunches in the shooting-field, enable her to display every separate attraction of feminine coquetry to the fullest advantage; and it requires more stoicism than usually falls to the lot of a bachelor to pass unscathed through the ordeal. Even here, however, all is not plain sailing; it sometimes happens that the gay Lothario, gifted with more acuteness of perception than the generality of

his fellows, sees through the manœuvre, and maliciously turns the tables on the fair intriguer by flirting outrageously with her as long as the pastime amuses him, and then by being summoned away at the critical moment by a convenient telegram, leaving the inconsolable Calypso to mourn his inconstancy, and ruminante on Jacob Faithful's maxim, "Better luck next time!"

Such examples of countermiming, it must be owned, are rare; in nine cases out of ten the success of the plan depends on the young lady herself; and it is not too much to say that so delicate an operation could scarcely be entrusted to more competent hands.

Match-making, as a profession, is far more extensively cultivated in Paris than with us; we have, to our knowledge at least, no M. de Foy or Madame St. Marc (the mother, by the way, of a once charming actress of the Vaudeville Theatre) to expatriate by means of eloquent advertisements on the manifold advantages of the happy state, and to encourage timid aspirants by an assurance of inviolable secrecy and discretion. With the single exception of that philanthropic journal, *The Matrimonial News*, this important question, as regards publicity, appears to us to have been unaccountably neglected and left entirely to the mercy of amateurs, who, it is to be feared, acquit themselves of their task with more zeal than ability. Taking into consideration the culpable indifference manifested by a large portion of the youthful community on the subject of matrimony, would it not be well by way of tacit reproach to stimulate their lukewarmness by an occasional reference to those whose experience of connubial bliss has by their own confession been a satisfactory one; and where can we find a more appropriate example than in the person of the late estimable M. Curmer?

When this eminent publisher brought out in 1838 his magnificent edition of *Paul and Virginia*, unquestionably one of the most beautiful works produced in France during the present century, his conjugal affection prompted him to associate with this masterpiece of typography and illustration the name of his wife, by causing her portrait in profile to be engraved at the foot of the concluding sentence of "The Indian Cottage," "on n'est heureux qu'avec une bonne femme." One hundred impressions of the book having been issued as an essay, this touching memorial of attachment was at once spotted and

mercilessly ridiculed by the critics; and so unanimous was the verdict that the mortified husband, much against his will, decided on cancelling the engraving, copies containing which, we may add for the benefit of collectors, are naturally of the greatest rarity.

To our mind this tribute to the virtues of an excellent lady merited a better fate; in our capacity of staunch advocate for matrimony we sympathise profoundly with the worthy M. Curmer, and believe as implicitly in the domestic elysium of his married life as in the long-enduring felicity of Baucis and Philemon. Nevertheless, as it behoves a conscientious chronicler to respect other people's opinions, and to treat impartially both sides of the question, we consider ourselves bound to record the following dialogue between a young couple inhabiting for the time being a cottage situated somewhere in the Welsh mountains during the last week of the honeymoon. We do not deem it necessary to state how the conversation came to our knowledge, but can safely guarantee its authenticity.

"How very dull you are this evening," observed the lady, rather more snappishly perhaps than is usual under the peculiar circumstances of her position; "you do nothing but yawn!"

"My dear," coolly replied the gentleman, "I believe it is generally accorded that man and wife are one; and, whether from constitutional infirmity or instinctive boredom I cannot take upon myself to say, I invariably yawn when I am alone!"

VIGNETTE.

THE long waves wash the strand, the fog lies low,
A moaning wind soft croons along the coast,
And, white and gleaming like a new-made ghost,
The sea-gull flaps along, heavy and slow,
Then fades in the grey mist. Aye to and fro
The scented seaweed, twined around yon post,
Floats, falls, then rises, until we almost
Deem that a mermaid calls on us to go
And join her court. The earth, the sea, the sky,
Are one drear tint; then round me as I dream,
Dead days arise and hold me in their arms,
And whisper me: All men are born to die,
And down is naught save presage of the gleam
That kills our clay, e'en while it gilds her charms.

IN BONNIE SCOTLAND.

PART XII. CONCLUSION.

SITTING on the esplanade at Oban watching the last purple lights on the peaks of Mull, the last warm touches on the inrushing tide, there mingles with the distant tootle of the German band the vehement tinkling of a hand-bell, followed by the hoarse proclamation of the bellman of the

burgh. And presently appears round the corner the old bellman himself with his mottled sun-burnt face that vies in colour with the red kerchief twisted about his neck. Cottagers come to their doors and listen, and here and there an old chum demands and receives a snuff from the well-polished mull. His announcement is not of high importance—just the times of starting of next morning's steamers—but he has a certain audience nevertheless, a few boatmen and some bare-legged children and the cottagers aforesaid standing listening at their doors.

"Ye will have finist your serment for the neet, Tammie, noo," suggests one of the patriarchs of the waterside.

"I'm noo so confident of that," replies Tammie with an air of dignified importance; "a public officer like meself is never sure for ony minute." But for the present there is an end of public announcements, and the bellman deposits himself and his bell upon a bench with something between a sigh and a groan. It is an anxious business, his, somebody suggests.

"Anchous! Ye may weel say that. But I'd never complain, niver, if it was not for yon raskil Germans," shaking his fist in the direction of the German band, "wi' the closhering clavering noise. The villins! they ought to be shelpit out of the country. Wad ye believe it noo? I come round wi' my bell and stand in front of them, and I ring, and I ring, and I ring again; will the villins stop their clamour? Deil a bit; the moore I ring the moore noise they—Oh, the villins, villins, villins! It's not only to me, sirs, but look at the disrespect to the rawtpeers."

A little reflection shows that it is the ratepayers and not any of the elective peers of Scotland or other minor nobility who are insulted in the person of Tammie, the bellman. But certainly the musicians ought to be taught their place.

"Museeshins," cries Tammie, "I'd no ca' them museeshins, but just clashclammering villins. Oh, if it was a real museeshin, a decent body of our own country—a feedle maybe or the pipes—I'd never say a word. But, man, does he recollect Macphail the piper—he's dead noo, gude man," with a sigh of regret for the memory of the piper; "weel, the moment he'd see me coming wi' the bell, oot wi' the blawer oot of his mouth! Eh, there was respect there."

The old bellman marches off muttering imprecations against the German band, whose strains, as they dash off in some

stirring waltz, seem to follow him mockingly.

"I'm thinking it's the kettle and the pot calling each other," said my neighbour, with a low chuckle, a soft-eyed melancholy-looking Highlander who seemed to devote his time to the education of Skye-terriers. Perhaps that was the amusement of his leisure hours; for he talked like a man who knew hard work and hard fare. He had travelled too; was acquainted with London; knew Charing Cross and Parliament Houses, and the Spike.

The Spike, for instance, whereabouts was that?

"I don't rightly know," said the Scot dreamily, "but it must be well-known there, for when I asked a man in the street where I could sleep, being a stranger and with no money, 'Oh,' he said, 'you must go to the spike, any bobbie will show you.' That is what they call the policemen."

And that led to the man telling the story of his journey to London. I wish I could tell it as he told it to me—all simply and graphically, with quaint turns of thought and expression. How he went to London to seek a man, and having no money to pay the railway fare, started to walk. How, after many days' walking, he reached London at last, having fared pretty well on the way, the people in the country being kind, though those in the towns were very hard. How, his last shilling being gone, he found that the man he had come to seek had left his work and had gone, no one could tell him whither. He had looked to the man to give him work, and there was no other man would say anything whatever. And the first night he spent in the spike. It was a fine place, quite clean, but bare-looking. "And they just searchit us, and took away our bits of money, and our pipes and our bawkie, and then the meenister came and said some words of comfort. And they locked us up. But ye never saw such sad characters as were there. I couldna bear to see them nor to listen to them. It was just seemly awful." And he went back no more to the spike, but wandered about the streets by day, afraid to wander far from Charing Cross lest he should lose himself altogether, and slept at night under some trees. At last he said to himself, "If I will starve I will starve in the country, and not among the tall houses and stone streets," and started one evening, but could hardly get clear of London, asking his way for Liverpool, which people did not seem to know, but

reached the fields at last and laid down thankful under a hedge. His troubles seemed to be over when he got beneath that hedge. And in due time he reached his Highland home, not much poorer than when he started.

It is pleasant to loiter here as night draws on and the riding-lights gleam out from the rigging of the ships that are lying in the bay, while the lamps of the town twinkle cheerfully along the sea front. Pleasant, too, to reflect that there is no compulsory early rising to be done in the morning. But it is difficult to stay in bed when the sunbeams flaunt cheerfully about the room; and then the general tintinnabulation of bells! Not church bells, indeed, for I think Oban only boasts of one of the tiny ting-tong order, but vigorous little hand-bells. I fancy I distinguish Tammie's official chime among the rest, but the most are milk-bells. And they bring the milk about in barrels, and serve it out of a tap as if it were so much whisky. There is a house opposite which seems to be let in flats, and at the sound of the milkman's bell there is a general assembly of all the women folk about the place, and a real good gossip all round.

Uncle Jock has chartered a boat for fishing in the bay, but I have a keen desire to get away inland. My eyes are tired of the dazzle of waters, and my ears are buzzing with the murmur of the sea. And so I start alone for Dunstaffnage Castle. Pleasant to the eye are the green woods of Dunolly, where still dwell the descendants of the Lords of Lorn. And most refreshing is the sight of a real market-garden. I have never before appreciated the rich verdure of a row of peas, or the homely tints of a phalanx of cabbages. And then a pleasant little glen with cows feeding on the hillside and a black collie watching them. A cottage by a burn, a whitewashed cottage with thatched roof and children splashing about in the water, and the mother looking on with evidently a keen hearty enjoyment of the sunshine, and sparkling stream, and laughing children, that is quite pleasant to witness. And then the sweet mountain air, the larks twittering and soaring, and the sheep bleating plaintively far and near, the hills warm-tinted with the blooming heather, and a wealth of wild flowers on either hand.

Presently Dunstaffnage comes in sight, an imposing ruin crowning a grey rock on a commanding headland, with a glimpse of the loch that sweeps round it.

It is no ordinary ruin, Dunstaffnage, but an ancient seat of the Scottish kings, and here were kings crowned long ago, sitting upon the great fetish stone of Scotland, the Coronation Stone, which was brought here from Iona, and which before then (tradition has it) had sojourned in the land of Jewry. The legend even has it that Jacob pillow'd his head upon it when he dreamt the dream about the ladder. From here the stone was carried to Scone, and from Scone, as everybody knows, to Westminster Abbey, where it still remains—no great thing in the way of a stone, but a memorial of the simple faith of a primitive people.

That the position of the castle was a strong one for defence you can judge by the difficulty there is in getting at it. There is fine pasturage, too, about the head of the loch, where the prince's horses and cattle might well grow fat. But the walk round the head of the loch, crossing a jolly little burnie by means of primitive stepping-stones, the castle in full view, and seeming to grow yet no nearer for all the walking you perform—the walk is certainly more fatiguing in the blaze of a hot sun than the distance can account for.

Half-way I pass a nice little cottage, whitewashed and thatched, with a pigsty handy built of big stones, while some rude farming implements and a pair of oars reared against the gable show the double nature of the cottar's labours. A nice-looking woman is at work by the door. I am very thirsty. Can she give me some milk? "Noo, sir; I've noo in the hoose be noo—I'm sorry." After all, I am only one of a string of people making their way to Dunstaffnage, and presently I overtake a Scotch minister with his plump wife and two daughters. This is by the head of the loch, where the cattle are standing knee-deep in the shallow waters, while a duck sails proudly along, with a brood of ducklings in her wake.

Close by the castle gate is the bailiff's house, where there is milk to be had, and in the snug cool parlour the good wife brings a foaming jug and a bottle of soda-water from a cool cellar hard by. There are two young men from Manchester also refreshing themselves, and the visitors' book shows that this Dunstaffnage is the object of a world-wide pilgrimage. Just above the names of Americans and Australians is the elaborate Hebrew signature of a Jew from Jerusalem—drawn here, per-

haps, by the fame of Jacob's pillow. The bailiff does the honours of the castle—a mere shell as far as the ancient buildings go—and points out with pride the very hole in the wall where the stone of destiny was once enshrined. Within the castle walls are two more modern dwellings; one the ancient residence of the Campbells, hereditary custodians of the castle, which has still some flavour of royalty about it—a dark and narrow domicile, which was gutted by fire more than a century ago—and a more modern shooting-lodge; both interesting buildings, but rather looked down upon by the bailiff, an intelligent fellow enough, as not sufficiently ancient to be worth notice. But the pride of his heart are the battlements, which are still practicable, with a fine old beacon-iron still standing on the walls, and a beautiful bronze gun, which, as he affirms, was fished up from the wreck of the Florida, that warship of the Spanish Armada which was sunk in Tobermory Bay. All the more is he zealous for the fame of this gun, that a local antiquary has put a slight upon it, having discovered, as he thinks, a date upon it—1700—which is a few years subsequent to the Armada. But our guide designates this meddling critic as a "gowl," and calls attention to the inscription on the breach of the gun, where you may read plainly enough:

ASSUERUS KOSTER MEFECIT AMSTELREDAM.

700 A.

Now, this last is not a date, but the number of the gun. Thus avers the guardian of the castle, looking for sympathy and assurance from the passing visitor. It is not a thing to be pronounced upon off-hand, but I should be disposed to back the bailiff.

He is not bailiff only, but ferryman. His skiff is by the shore, and he will carry us across the loch, saving a walk of two miles or so. But then his penny-fee is half-a-crown. There are plenty who will pay it, so that he is not to be blamed for asking it, the Highlands now being "run" on strictly commercial principles. But the best of all farms in these parts, I should say, is a good tourist farm. I should like to gather shillings as quickly and easily as they are picked up in the Highlands. Not that this applies to Dunstaffnage, which is free and open to all the world.

Pleasant is the view from the battlements, too, with the double peak of Ben Cruachan closing the vista of loch and

mountain—Ben who presides at the head of Loch Etive and Loch Awe.

In the wood close by, almost overgrown with bushes and briars, is a ruined chapel of some importance, with fragments of lancet-windows and early mouldings to be made out among the luxuriant growth of ivy and creepers. It is used as a family burial-place, and presents a picture of solitary desolation. And within the nave of the chapel wild and garden flowers grow rampant among the tombs. A fuchsia has grown to the size of a shrub, which says a good deal for the winter climate hereabouts. Probably the chapel belonged to some conventual establishment, which has left no other traces of its existence.

It may be that at times

Dunstaffnage hears the raging
Of Connel with his rocks engaging ;
but to-day there is nothing to be heard of the so-called Cataract of Connel, which is merely the rush of the tide in and out through a narrow channel.

Perhaps the pleasantest experience of the day is to lie on the grass, and smoke by the side of the burn that bubbles noisily among the stones, with Dunstaffnage mirrored in the placid loch, the hoary ruin among the soft green of the wood, with hills beyond purple in the distance, a white sail stealing quietly round the point, till the stream ceased to babble, for the tide has been stealing up quietly and has stopped its flow. There are sea-shells in the brook and seaweeds on the brae, but the scene is one of deep rural tranquility as if far removed from the strife and turmoil of the sea.

Coming back to Oban, I find a letter from Mary. She is not too comfortable at Longashpan ; but she would stay out her visit, only Archie wants her at home. He was really touched in his affections, it seems, by the attractions of Miss Vanderpump, and fancied that everything was going on swimmingly, when suddenly an affianced lover made his appearance, just landed from the States, and Archie found himself put out in the cold. And she can sympathise with him so much more fully now that she is so happy herself ; with other remarks meant for no other eyes but mine. The upshot is that she is going back to Glasgow by Saturday's steamer. Well, that fits in very nicely with my own plans, for I will see Mary back to Glasgow and then make tracks for London. The Gillies family are going to visit some friends in the direction of Loch Awe,

and I take leave of them to-night, for I am going to Staffa and Iona to-morrow, and they may be gone before the steamer returns.

The steamer is well filled—crowded indeed with passengers for the trip to Iona ; for the day is fine and beautifully calm, and the run up the Sound of Mull, calling, as on the voyage to Skye, at Salen and Tobermory, is enjoyable in the extreme. But the west side of Mull is scarcely so interesting, with its iron-bound coast, and savage-looking lochs, and bays bristling with rocks. The sea is studded with islets, the Treshnish isles and Fladda, and a curiously shaped island accurately described by its name, the Dutchman's Cup :

And Ulva dark and Colonsay,
And all the troop of islets gay
That guard famed Staffa round.

But they are not gay these islets, not even in the sunshine, with a soft summer breeze and the water crystal-clear, and what they must be when the wild Atlantic surges are raging against their rugged sides imagination fails to picture. And Staffa, too, approached from this side, is disappointing, just a humpy kind of island of sad-coloured rock topped with turf with never a column to boast of as far as one can see. And when the steamer paddles slowly towards the island, one is irresistibly reminded of a wharf on the Thames where old iron is stored with rusty iron rails leaning against the wall. By this time there is a big red lifeboat in attendance, which comes over from the mainland every day to meet the steamer ; and the Chevalier's own boat is also lowered, and everybody crowds on board. It is a calm day, with an oily, treacly roll on the water. Fortunately the passage is short, and we are soon scrambling upon the broken columns at the entrance to Fingal's Cave. And we enter, a long procession—creatures of an hour, butterfly tourists if you like—into this temple of unmeasured ages.

The melancholy wail of the Atlantic surge, with the soft continuous reverberations from the vault above ; the deep purple gloom within, flecked with reflections from the restless waves ; the massive grandeur of the columns supporting the roof, that seem as if they could bear a world on their shoulders ; these things you may feel, but they cannot be described. You must give in to Fingal's Cave. It is wonderful, unapproachable, indescribable. One hastens to retract any disrespectful remarks about Staffa. In that one glimpse of this wondrous cave there is an end of

all dissatisfied grumblings. If we see no more than this the day has been well spent.

Considerable pains have been taken to make the place safe for visitors. There is a balustrade of wire-rope into the further end of the cave ; there are ropes and hand-rails wherever there is any semblance of danger. And it is marvellous to see the old people picking their way about, and enjoying it all to the full ; not merely elderly people, but regular veterans in the sere and yellow leaf, a fact which says a good deal for the indomitable vitality of the English race.

From Fingal's Cave we scramble over the tops of broken columns, and up a kind of staircase cut out of the rock to the very top of the island. Not a soul lives upon the island, nor is there any vestige left of human habitation. There are no sheep or cattle, not even rabbits perhaps. And then we take a bird's-eye glance at the other noted caves—the Clamshell with pillars curved, a fashion that resembles on a gigantic scale the cast of a clamshell in wet sand—indeed, the islands seem to be undermined with caves, and one can understand the terror of the solitary shepherd who once essayed a winter residence on the island, but found the noises within and without from wind and wave too terrible to be borne.

As soon as the passengers are on board again we bear away for Iona, which is presently fully in view, a well-balanced island with a rounded boss in the middle, which is Dun-y, a monticle not quite four hundred feet in height, but the champion mount of Iona, and surely gifted with as short a surname as any hill in Britain. The sides slope evenly away from this central boss, with the cathedral—or perhaps the minster would be more correct, as Iona probably never had a bishop—seen in profile on the eastern side.

A strangely stirring sight is this lonely Inchcolmkill and its ruined church, with its varied memories of the ooden time. A sacred island to the tribes of these shores, both of Scotland and Ireland, probably even before the advent of Christianity. The custody of the fetish stone—which was there before Columba came, at the latter end of the sixth century—probably entailed some pre-Christian temple on the island, to which, no doubt, the galleys of the neighbouring chiefs brought gifts and offerings, perhaps even captive youth or maiden for the horrid rite of human sacrifice. But at a very early date in the Christian era,

Iona no doubt was colonised by missionaries of the new faith, who took a wise advantage of the reverence already felt for the site. Boetius, the uncritical historian of Scotland, tells a story which he hardly invented, although, perhaps, he adapted it from the chronicles of some other land. Anyhow, he asserts that Fergus the Second, King of the Scots, assisted Alaric the Goth in the sacking of Rome, A.D. 410, and brought away, as part of the plunder, a chest of books which he presented to the monastery of Iona. And this story perhaps gave rise to the belief that a store of valuable manuscripts existed at one time in the library of Iona ; the lost books of Livy, indeed, among them, according to some. And it is said that the archives of Iona were eventually transferred to Drontheim, in which diocese it had been included when the Norwegians had possession of the isle, and that they were destroyed in a great fire there.

But it is hardly likely that there was any library there in Columba's time. Columba, indeed, was not of a literary turn, and would no doubt have converted the books of Livy into psalters, if he had once got hold of them. And of these ruins which are now in full view, nunnery, oratory, and minster, there are none directly connected with the life of Columba. It is doubtful whether the church even is on the site of his church. And yet the whole island is as it were dedicated to his memory.

Angels have met him on the way
Beside the blessed martyr's bay,
And by Columba's stone.

The martyr's bay is close by the landing-place, where the population of Iona have turned out to meet us—the brown bare-legged children with saucers of little shells. "Shalls, tuppens; Archins, thruppens," they cry continually, these young Gaelic traders. But there is no time for loitering. MacDonald, the official guide, has us in charge, and hustles us along from one holy place to another. First to the nunnery—the notion of which would have horrified Columba, for in his day not a woman was allowed to set foot on the island. But here are plenty of half-defaced tombs of good sisters, whose lives glided away in this solitary isle ; and there were nuns living here in community till well into the seventeenth century. And then to the oratory dedicated to Saint Oran, which may have been founded by the same Margaret who built the little chapel on the

summit of Edinburgh Castle rock, and then up the street of the dead, along which in old times the bodies of the departed great were borne to their last resting-place in the church. Here half-way, on a commanding knoll, is perhaps the most curious and ancient monument in the island—Maclean's Cross so-called, cut from a very thin slab of stone, and curiously carved with intricate knots and patterns. And this is the site of Columba's stone, where it is said he rested just before his death, and where his old grey horse came to greet him by rubbing his nose upon the saint's shoulder, as if conscious that he would see his master no more.

Then we turn into the cathedral—a motley group of pilgrims from many lands, and of all sorts and sizes. A couple of artists, who have set up their easels on a knoll close by, suspend their labours at our approach, and light their pipes, perhaps despising us as not at all in keeping with the scene. And allgather about MacDonald, who takes us to an enclosed mound, which is called the tomb of the kings. So many kings of Scotland, so many of Ireland, so many of Norway, and a few thrown in as kings of France. Our guide is very confident as to the numbers, and we may be quite certain that Duncan is of the number, perhaps with Macbeth's dagger lying among his bones; for what says Shakespeare:

Where is Duncan's body?
Carried to Colme-kill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

But there has been a recent burial under the shadow of Iona's church, and, among the accumulated dust of mighty chiefs, lie the crew of an American ship that was lost among the rocks close by.

The ruins of the minster are of various dates, from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries, and owe their excellent preservation to the toughness of the building material—the red granite from the Ross of Mull on the opposite side of the sound, hewn from the same quarries which supplied the material for Blackfriars Bridge and the Holborn Viaduct. An archeologist might spend a long time here very profitably, with plenty of architectural problems and knotty sculptures to occupy his mind.

But the steamer is whistling a shrill recall, and the guide has galloped us through the holy places, and he really does it very well, and compresses a great amount of solid information into his short peripatetic lectures. He has got us through

the holy places, and is now as busy as ever in helping to get the people off. The children have followed us everywhere, and now accompany us to the water's edge with their constant cry of "Shalls, shalls, tuppens!" But what a charming water's edge, with coloured rocks, and wondrous shells and sea forms, and lovely seaweeds, waving and beckoning from below, seen through the crystal water!

And when we get on board there is the welcome sound of the dinner-bell, and we turn from the granite cliffs of Mull without regret, and by the time dinner is over we are off Loch Buy, with its solitary mansion surrounded by bluff mountains, and then we sight Kerrera Isle, and soon after run alongside Oban Pier.

And then comes the morning of departure, bright and fair, while all the Gillies family have got up early to see me off. It is a cruel trial to friendship to be fellow-travellers for any length of time; but we have got through it pretty successfully on the whole, and the prospect of a temporary separation excites a glow of warmth in our respective bosoms. I have promised Jennie to puff Ronald unscrupulously wherever I have any influence, and on her part Jennie has pledged herself by fair means or foul to bring Mary back with her for a long visit.

While we are thus engaged the Iona makes her appearance round the headland, and soon we descry Mary standing on the paddle-box, and waving her handkerchief in recognition. And then there is the usual inflooding of passengers, including the German band, while Tammie the bellman watches their departure with grim satisfaction alloyed by the knowledge that they are coming back to-night.

My satisfaction in having Mary as a travelling companion is also subject to a slight alloy. Mrs. Grant has sent a dragon of a maid to escort her as far as the Crinan, and Archie is to meet her at Ardrishaig. So that really we shall only have the isthmus and its passage just to our two selves. Still a good deal may be done on an isthmus. And if I had not been over the ground, the ground of loch and sound and broad ocean, on the outward journey, few are the impressions of travel I should be able to record in returning. The depths of a pair of blue eyes, the inflections of a tender voice, these absorb my perceptions for the moment, and all else seems a vague background of no particular importance. It is all like the slide of a magic lantern

drawn backwards. The piper is waiting there by the lock, and the little children cry "Melk, melk!" and I give them coppers in the fulness of my heart, unrebuked. And we are taken on board the big Columba, and we pass all the sunny rural watering-places on the Clyde, and among the mere skeletons of ships and the noisy hammers that are clothing them with life, and then we are in smoky Glasgow, and driving through its busy streets. And then I remember a tender parting, while the night train for the south stands waiting in trim array. And then a long oblivion of sleep which I only shake off in the dusky daylight of the Marylebone Road.

But my heart is still in the Highlands.

GEOFFREY STIRLING.

BY MRS. LEITH ADAMS.

PROLOGUE.

CHAPTER III. AN APPEAL.

A FOREHEAD rather high than broad, but somewhat concealed at times by the black grey-lined locks that fell over it, eyebrows sharp and projecting, over-hanging eyes deep-set, dark, keen, and somewhat restless; the rest of the face clear-cut and well-defined, though the lips were too thin for beauty, and the upper one was too long for perfect symmetry.

Such was Geoffrey Stirling—at all events, as seen by the world in general; notably as seen in such a moment of trial as that in which he first appears on the scene of this story.

His figure was tall and spare, almost gaunt, but not without grace; his hands of wonderful refinement and elegance, yet giving no idea of lack of power, restless when any deep emotion stirred him, infinitely tender and caressing when lightly touching the pretty locks of his only child, little Ralph, the child of his mature age, and, like the late blossom of the year, precious exceedingly.

People called Geoffrey Stirling a shrewd, yet large-hearted man—two qualities hard to find united in one personality—a sternly just man, and yet one to whom no tale of sorrow was ever told in vain; in fact, an embodiment of antitheses.

They knew him not who did not see his powers of gentleness, as shown to his wife, a chronic and ever-complaining sufferer; of tenderness, as drawn forth towards the child of his love.

He had married—later in life than most

men—impetuously for one so cool-headed, bewitched by a woman's delicately-tinted and perfectly-refined loveliness; had dreamed his dream of dual life, and awakened to find himself mated with a fool—a loving fool, and not an exacting one, it was true, but still a woman with whom no equality of companionship was possible.

He looked truth in the face, resolved not to expect more than truth, and to make the best of truth, never letting Lucy, his wife, learn that the truth, for him, held bitter disappointment.

In due time a son was born to him, and then the mother drifted into perpetual ill-health, grew to find a sad pleasure in symptoms, a complacent happiness in detailing the same, and never found in her husband a listless auditor.

Things might have been worse—where, indeed, is the human being whose state and condition might not be worse?

Lucy might have been a jealous fool—the worst type of the class; or a tyrannical fool. As it was, she was thoroughly happy with her ailments and her remedies, always pretty, and given to dainty invalid costumes—"so very interesting," as certain other women averred, not realising the fact that they only had as much of her as they liked, but that to those who had her always it was possible she might become a trifle wearisome. She loved her husband after a tepid kind of fashion, loved him most of all when he put cushions under her head and shawls over her feet, and went softly because the "symptoms" were worse than usual.

In all the gentle uneventful years of her married life she never asked herself if she made him happy. It was enough for her to grasp the one important truth that he was considerate and kind, and always checked little Ralph when the buoyancy of his animal spirits caused him to forget "poor mamma's head." This was, however, not often, for the boy was, as a rule, thoughtful beyond his years.

Mrs. Stirling—or "Mrs. Geoffrey," as she was called to distinguish her from the possible and visionary wife of the elder Stirling—also loved her son; at least, there is every reason to suppose so, since she went into violent hysterics when he cut his hand with the gardener's pruning-knife, and fainted outright when she saw the poor little finger bandaged up with a blood-bedabbled handkerchief. She used to call Ralph her "darling pride," and was very particular that Nurse Prettyman should

keep his clustering locks in the best order; but she never taught him to say his prayers at her knee, or watched the child-mind opening day by day, yearning to guide it aright, as a precious trust.

And so it came about that a love—or rather a passion of tenderness—grew up between father and son. Each life lacked something—the one consciously, the other unconsciously—and each in the other found the lacking thing. The boy Ralph was strikingly like his father—like, yet with a difference. The same landscape seen through the glow of softer light; the same melody set in a sweeter key; such was little Ralph compared to the man who loved him with every fibre of his being. The father's eyes were keen and bright, the child's grave, wistful, and of a lighter hazel, full of golden lights when he laughed; more heavily lashed. The father's eyes could soften to tenderness, but never lighten into merriment: the child's did so, often. The boy's lips, too, were fuller, though the small determined chin showed a tiny cleft, the miniature of the one in his sire's. Ralph's locks held prisoned sunshine in their fair luxuriance, though they grew like his father's, and he had a droll way of tossing them back that was the perfect reflection of the other. The hands, daintily fashioned, long, slender, yet nervous and full of power, were the hands of Geoffrey himself in little. People said the junior partner in the Becklington Bank was an old-looking man to have so young a child; and this was so, not only because he had married late in life, but because his fifty years sat heavily upon him—as years are apt to do upon the head of any man whose lot in life it is to try and make the best of things, carefully avoiding the worst.

As he faced the crowd gathered about the bank, in the sudden silence that had followed so quickly on the heels of tumult, every eye raised to the open window where he stood, it might well have been said that Geoffrey Stirling looked in very truth an old man for his years. It has been said that he had risen from a bed of sickness at the call of a terrible rumour, and that he bore the marks of recent suffering yet about him. Of haste, too, for his hair was unkempt, his dress disordered; his frilled shirt was unbuttoned at the throat, leaving its long and swarthy column exposed; his mulberry-coloured coat had been drawn on hastily, and hung loosely upon a form which had grown some-

what gaunt and hollow in the chest of late.

He leant one hand against the window-frame, raising it high above his head; the other, when first the crowd caught sight of him, was pressed upon his breast, and he seemed to draw his breath heavily, as might one who had laboured up a hill and but just reached the summit.

As he thus stood for a moment silent, immovable, more than ever looking from below like a picture in its frame, a low murmur of sound, like the rise and whirr of myriad flies disturbed from a feast of carrion, came from the watching crowd.

But at the first sound of his voice the hissing of a thousand whispers died.

"My friends—" he said, and got no further for the moment, since a brawny farmer, whip in hand and pale with the situation in which he found himself, cut his speech short with an exclamation uttered in a voice as big and burly as himself:

"That we be, Maister Geoffrey—every man and mother's son of us—let what may be 'oop wi' t' bank, and thee wi' it!"

Again the myriad flies buzzed—in affirmation this time.

"Thanks, thanks," said Geoffrey Stirling, letting his hand drop to his side, and leaning further forward so as to be heard the more plainly; "I am sure of that, Farmer Dale—sure of that; and all the more because I am so sure of that, I wish with all my heart that what I have to tell you now could be softened, or in any way made less bitter and cruel than it is—to you and to me—"

He hesitated a moment, while the crowd swayed and shook as you may see the tree-tops in a forest stir and shake as the wind buffets them this way or that, for every atom in the whole strove to get nearer and nearer to the open window.

Jake, in his flounderings, turns, and twistings, seemed to be swimming determinedly against stream, for the thought of the sad face beneath the widow's cap, and of "the patch," at once mumchance, loving, and frightened out of his young wits, clinging on to his mother's rusty black gown, to say nothing of the "three soles" at home, nerved his arm, and dowered those spare legs of his with a new agility.

So Jake got well to the front, and there too was Gabriel Devenant, for whom, just because he had such a mad-like look about him, way had been made by the more sane of the community.

The unhappy man had clasped his hands

behind his head, and with upturned face—a face that looked like a mask save for the glowing eyes that burned from under shaggy brows—listened for the speaker's next words, as might the criminal for his doom.

"I know," said the voice from above, "that a rumour gained credence among you an hour ago to the effect that the bank had stopped payment."

"We'en heered a wur story still, Maister Geoffrey, sin' last hour struck," cried out Farmer Dale, again cutting the thread of the junior partner's story, "and we're looking for to hear yo' call it the domed loi as it is. Choke them as set it goin', say I!"

The hand that grasped the window-frame closed more nervously upon it, and with stronger tension.

"It is not a lie," said Geoffrey Stirling; "it is a cruel truth. A great crime has been committed in our midst—the bank has been robbed!"

As this last word passed the lips of the speaker, there was a shriek from Gabriel Devenant—he flung up his arms as if in a wild appeal to Heaven, and fell convulsed and foaming at the mouth into the arms of those nearest to him.

Dr. Turtle, who had maintained his hard-won position on the horse-block, keeping up a running commentary to which no one paid the smallest attention, and, having found his snuff-box, taking snuff enough to have blown any other man's head off, at this precipitated himself into the crowd, promptly had the sick man borne to a place of safety, and there set to work to minister to him.

All these things were not done amid peace and silence, for a perfect Babel of voices had arisen, and Geoffrey Stirling, seeing the hopelessness of making himself heard, folded his arms, leant against the side of the window, and waited.

The tumult grew. Some one cried out that it would be well to break into the bank, for those who would suffer by the crime that had been committed could then see for themselves how matters stood. Not one, but a score of hands were raised above the sea of heads, each grasping a stone.

There was a rush and sway towards the lower windows, still closely barred, though broken.

The hubbub increased. The situation became more and more critical.

Of what avail was the valour of Matthew Hawthorne, constable-in-chief of Beckington and the surrounding country, in

the face of such an emergency? Matthew had been a soldier, he had also been provided at the expense of the ratepayers with a tall glazed hat supposed to be an article peculiarly adapted to resist the whacks which the helmet of so doughty a champion would naturally receive in the onerous discharge of his duty.

But the glazed hat was trampled under foot; and Matthew himself—a mere effigy of himself—was ignominiously crushed flat against the wall of the Court House, and there held in durance vile, no one paying the slightest heed to his remonstrances upon such unseemly treatment of a "Queen's officer."

As Geoffrey Stirling watched the turmoil below, a lank and trembling hand was laid upon his sleeve, and a voice, husky with fear, said urgently :

"Come away, come away, Master Geoffrey. They're mad, they know not what they do. Heaven pity them, and give them back their senses!"

With a sudden sweet smile the man addressed turned a moment to the speaker.

"Never fear, Anthony," he said; "they will not hurt me. It is only an impulse. It will pass."

The large timid eyes, the lank white locks of the manager, were seen at the window as the old man peered at the crowd below.

To his simple mind it seemed as though the end of all things was at hand—as if the sun should suffer fell eclipse instead of shining on unblinkingly on such a scene; as if the heavens might fall, or the solid earth be upheaved and rent.

The house had been robbed; the firm was in trouble. What more had fate in its power to do? How could any man be expected to face such a state of things and live? But yet there was Master Geoffrey, the man whose lips had never yet uttered a word that savoured not of kindness to his faithful servant; the man whom he could call to mind a dark-eyed stripling, full of life and earnestness; the man who, when poor old Anthony lay sick, had sat by his bed, held his hand, cheered him with gentle words of sympathy and hope—there was Master Geoffrey to be thought of.

But the danger passed; the impulse of destruction and revenge rose as a wave rises before the wind, then died. Curiosity was the oil upon the water.

"Why dunnot yo' be still, lads, and hearken to what Maister Geoffrey's got to say?" Farmer Dale had shouted lustily. "Yo can wreck t' bank when yo know all

about the matter, if so be as yo see aught to gain by't."

The common-sense of the man's words commended them to the hearers. The crisis passed, as Geoffrey Stirling had said it would. A hearing was now possible.

"I am glad you have made up your minds to listen to me," he said, and it was wonderful how far the clear resonant voice travelled, "for I want you to know all the truth—that is, as much of it as can be known at present. It is of no use for me to try and make things better than they are, or to deny that heavy loss must come upon many of you. The bank has been broken into, and—hard of belief as such a thing may seem, both to you and to me—almost gutted."

There was a stir and rustle at this, but no one spoke. Ears were strained too intently for tongues to wag easily.

"Every desk and locker has been opened, either by false keys or picklocks. The iron safes in the wall stand wide open; a handful or two of ashes on the hearth are all that remain of the ledgers. This morning, when the head clerk came to his desk, he found it open, and the keys of the safes gone. The evil deed has been very thoroughly done. A great sum in gold, notes for large amounts, bonds, bills, securities—all are missing. It rests with you to give those who will undertake the task every chance of detecting the perpetrators of the crime and of tracing the stolen money. No time has been lost; a messenger has been already despatched to London; a Bow Street runner will be here as quickly as possible. The same messenger will also summon the senior partner to my help. I have done all I can."

"Aye, aye, we dunnut doubt that, Maister Geoffrey," said a voice from the crowd; "we dunnut doubt that, and yo' risen from a sick-bed to coom and try to gi' us a word o' comfort; it's as hard on yo, Maister Geoffrey, as on us and our wives and childern, as any man wi' two eyes i' his yed may see for himsen." It was indeed hard for him, how hard they had scarcely realised until they saw him push back the hair from his brow and lift a white and haggard face a moment heavenwards, as if in one swift instant's protest against so cruel a stroke of fate.

"If we can do aught, say so, Maister Geoffrey," put in Farmer Dale, rather husky this time from the strong emotion that swelled within his ample breast. Farmer Dale was—nay, we must change the tense,

and say had been—what is called a man well-to-do, a man whose "savings" were spoken of with respect; a man, too, with a large family, a possession that was counterbalanced by a thrifty wife, and had therefore not stood in the way of that "laying by for a rainy day" that is ever the path of wisdom. Things were going very hardly with Farmer Dale, and yet, of so large-hearted and generous a nature was the man, that he well-nigh forgot his own inevitable loss in looking at the man upon whose shoulders a terrible responsibility rested, and who at a time of such dire need was deprived of the presence and counsel of the head of the house.

"You can do this," answered Geoffrey Stirling. "Strive to be patient with me when I say that, upon my own authority, my own responsibility, I have ordered the bank to be kept closed as it is now; the door to be unbarred to none, not a rifled lock examined, not a smouldering ember stirred. If justice is to have any chance—if any redress be possible for your wrongs and mine—everything must remain exactly as it was found this mraing when Davey first gave the alarm that a robbery had been committed. Standing here then before you, feeling the weight of your anger and your sorrow pressing as heavily upon myself as upon you, I ask you to give me your endurance and patience; I ask you to wait—perhaps the hardest thing any of us can have to do, when the heart is hot within us and we burn to redress the wrongs of those dearest to us; and yet I ask it at your hands. If you see fit to break into the bank to satisfy your curiosity as to how the violated sanctuary looks, I cannot hinder you. We should be but a small force arrayed against so many. I am feeble from illness, Anthony from old age. Davey and Sherrard are but striplings, and Gaylad knows most of you too well to fly at you. The matter then rests in your own hands. If you can trust me to act for the best for you all in this emergency, I shall be the debtor of each one of you individually; I shall owe you a debt of gratitude to my dying day."

In giving his own account subsequently of this part of the day's proceedings, Farmer Dale put it thus:

"He wur brave enough wur Maister Geoffrey to stond oop agen things 'till he coom to sayin' how he'd tak' it kind at our hands for to put our trust in him, and possess our minds i' patience, and then his voice got a kind of a shake in it, same as

the church organ afore we got it reetly fettled last Lady Day was a twelvemonth, and he leant his two hands on t' window-sill, and bowed his head, and seemed fair ready to drop wheer he stood. Ay, but it's sorry business, neighbours, and mony of us mun carry a light pocket and a heavy heart ower it. Why, they'n say as Gabriel Devenant's gone daft-like wi' the sorrow on't, and Lord knows he'd sorrow enoo along o' that fine madam of his, wi'out such a slap o' the face as this. What dang's me is this, what wur the dog Gaylad after as he never giv' tongue wi' such a scurriment goin' on about him? There's the boy Davey, he's another knot hard to rave is Davey. Such a wick chap as he is, fur all he's a bit ill-balanced about the head and shoulders, and him sleepin' in the room where t' keys was kep' and never hearin' nothin' no more than the dead. It's like as if so many boggarts had been at work, that's what it is."

These sentiments were given utterance to within the hospitable precincts of The Safe Retreat, a public-house of much respectability, facing into Main Street, but abutting upon the river in the form of a long narrow tea-garden running downhill all the way, and dotted here and there by rustic arbours, more or less frequented by spiders, but looked upon as delightful places to spend a summer's afternoon in, nevertheless.

Needless to say, The Safe Retreat had reaped a glorious harvest during the day that was now passed. When, indeed, does not mental agitation render the need for refreshment imperative? Among a certain class of the human community is not thirst the natural outcome of emotion? In truth the feminine population of Becklington were apt to demur to the adjective "safe" as applied to The Retreat; and many a man was glad to take his wife to tea in one of the rustic erections in the back-garden of a summer's evening, as a sort of plea for a kindly toleration of his own frequent appearances in the front-parlour of that seductive hostelry.

On the present occasion certain habitués—men of mark, so to speak—were gathered together in that pleasant meeting-place, while a kind of outer fringe of unwonted, or at all events unnoticed guests, crowded round the nucleus of talent in the centre. Farmer Dale was listened to with respect. He was—or had been until that morning—a man of substance, a man of influence, of acknowledged probity, and of a conviviality

always restrained within proper bounds; he was one whose opinion naturally carried weight, whether on the commonplace subject of the probable yield of the turnip crop, or on some social matter of higher import.

His utterances upon this day's wonderful events are therefore not things to be slighted; but rather pondered upon as likely to contain much seed of profound wisdom and probability. When he had done speaking there was a murmur of assent from the select few, and a response from the outer fringe.

The chief constable's glazed hat had been rescued from among the legs of the populace, and its various indentations smoothed out as far as such treatment was possible, but it still presented a battered and dissipated appearance as it reposed upon the bench beside its owner, who now and again gave it a sidelong rueful glance. Matthew himself appeared also slightly the worse for his late experiences, and had a bruise about the size of a well-grown rib-stone-pippin over his left eye, which unnatural protuberance his wife had securely bound with a checked pocket-handkerchief and a bit of raw beefsteak. Altogether the chief constable presented the appearance of a soldier who had seen some active service, and suffered thereby both in person and attire.

"You say well, Farmer Dale," said he in his slow manner, refilling his pipe leisurely as he spoke; "the boy Davey has, to use a figure o' speech, bin as heavy as lead upon my mind this while back. What was he hup to? What was he a-doin'? says I to myself, over and over again. What was the boy Davey a-doin' of?"

"Why nothing—that's the worst of it; that's the wonder of it," replied the farmer; "sleeping like a young pig i' straw, and I'm danged if I know how he did it either, for, as I said afore, he's a wick chap is Davey, and full o' sense too for such a little fellow. Now if it had been that lazy lad, Abel Dibbs," continued the oracle, turning to Jake, who jumped as if a flea had bitten him at the suddenness of the attack, "I'd have said nowt, but just loike what you might have looked for, for by all accounts he beats fattest sou i' the sty for snoozing and snoring does Abel."

"Ay, that does he," said Jake, rubbing up his hair and mightily smiting his knee to give greater emphasis to his words; "he's an Abel as 'ull make a Cain o' me, one of these days, I know, wi' those aggravating ways o' his'n; but I'm o' your way o' thinkin', Farmer Dale, about the boy

Davey. It's a wonderment all through, that's what it is. And then there's the dog Gaylad. I've heard tell that he sleeps stretched across Davey's feet. Summat must ha' bewitched the two on 'em, and made 'em deaf as adders, and heavy-headed as Softie there, when he lies down i' the ditch on's way home, and takes it for an honest truckle-bedstead. Whoy, I've heard tell as he's bin known to turn round—and him all among the duckweed and jacky-sharps—and hollerout to's missus to know what toime it wur."

Their hearts are sad within them, but there is a laugh at this, and Softie—a chuckle-headed fellow, who apparently owns no other name—laughs among the rest: the more heartily, indeed, since he has never owned a spare shilling in his life, and having nothing to lose, was none the worse for the day's events—rather the better, indeed, several people having "treated" him in that generous spirit which is often the outcome of wide-spread agitation and excitement.

Any other cobbler than Jake, and any other fool than Softie, would have been out of place in the select inner circle of the gathering at The Safe Retreat; but both individuals were Becklington notabilities, each in his several way. Therefore was Softie tolerated and Jake listened to, by such men as Farmer Dale and Matthew Hawthorne, constable-in-chief.

Having had the laugh with him in the matter last under discussion, Jake, spurred to greater efforts of social success, as is the way with most of us, again took up his parable.

"I'm minded, too, to think, neighbours," he said with a knowing air, as of one whose habit it was to dig deep down and get at the root of things, "that there stands no man in Becklington, or out of it, to be more pitied this day than Maister Geoffrey Stirling; and him only rose, as one may put it, straight off a sick-bed, which anyone may see by t' looks on him. All the 'sponsibilities is a-weighin' on him, the senior being absent, and mighty things, such as no man could foresee, comin' to pass. When first my eyes lighted on him, the voice within me said: 'Jake, my brave fellow, as sure as one day you shall walk in glory—'"

But here Jake was tripped up, and learnt that social success is at all times an uncertain and slippery eminence.

"What's that inner voice o' thine bin up to now, Jake?" said Amos Callender,

who came dropping in at the moment, promptly made way for by the outer fringe, and taking a place alongside Farmer Dale. "You have a care what it leads you on to. It seems a flatterin' kind of a voice, and flatterers is mostly liars. Have a care, neighbour—have a care! 'With the flatterer are busy mockers,' so Scripter tells us, and that voice o' thine is too fair-spoken, too full of 'brave fellows,' and 'good fellows,' and such like, to be altogether trusted in. If it were to tak' to remindin' yo as we're all nobbut poor perishin' worms, yo among the rest, I'd think better of it. If yo come to that," continued the worthy tanner, upof whose temper the day's work had told considerably, "how dost thee know thee'l ever walk in glory at all?"

Jake, who had nothing but the inner voice to fall back upon by way of testimony, looked rather blank, nor was his discomposure lessened by Matthew Hawthorne (who oftentimes took too much upon himself by reason of his office, in the opinion of some people) cutting in in a personal and exceedingly unpleasant manner; in fact, touching upon a tender point.

"If so be as thou dost come to such promotion, Jake," said he, still bearing a grudge against the universe generally in the matter of that battered hat of his, and glad to vent his spleen upon any object that chanced to present itself, "I'm trusting the Lord 'ull do summat for those legs o' thine, or, by my wig! thou'l cut but a poor figure, lad, along o' the rest of 'em!"

Farmer Dale burst into one of his loud guffaws at this and the sight of Jake's face, which looked for all the world as if he'd got a sudden squeeze of lemon in his mouth; and things might have got rather hot but for Amos Callender, whose good heart misgave him for having set the ball going and brought poor Jake to sorrow.

"Never you mind, neighbour," he said, giving the little cobbler a slap on the back hearty enough to have knocked him over if he hadn't been securely seated; "a man's legs ain't of no count at all, if so be as his heart's i' the right place. Ain't we told i' the Book that the Lord delighteth not in any man's legs, but 'loveth a cheerful giver'? And didn't I hear tell on a' thou didst for the widow and fatherless this day? So say no more, neighbour—say no more. I'm a bit cross-grained to-night, and that's all about it. It's thinkin' o' that lass o' mine, and the savins I thought to mak' a lady of her wi', and them of no more account than the

grass as is cut down and cast i' the oven, as the sayin' goes. It's that as set me on thrappin' at that inner voice o' thine. But bear no malice, Jake—bear no malice."

At this the chief constable—great men are but human, after all—thawed too, and nodded at the object of all these comments, as much as to convey a comforting hope that weakly legs, however knock-kneed, were by no means to be looked upon as hindrances to an ultimate glorified condition. So once more the bank robbery, the "bewitchment" of the boy Davey and the dog Gaylad, the abject despair of old Anthony Geddes, the rage of the senior partner when he should learn the dread and terrible news even now on its way to him, the expected advent of a Bow Street runner in their midst, the probable discovery of the criminal or criminals concerned in consequence of such a mighty arm of the law being stretched out to hunt down and pounce upon the same—all these topics, and many akin to them, kept tongues going at The Safe Retreat up to an hour unwontedly late.

Then, still full of speculation, of wonder, and of fear, the party broke up, went out into the quiet autumn night, and, as by one consent, wandered towardsthe market-place.

Like a dead man whom no clamour can awaken, the bank showed its closed and shuttered windows, like blind, unseeing eyes, to the brooding night, even as it had shown them to sunlit hours of the day that was past.

Pacing slowly to and fro before the passage that led to the lurking door, was a watchman, clothed in what appeared to be an endless succession of capes one above another, so that his width became abnormal, and, he being a short man, entirely disproportioned to his height.

He carried a lantern in his hand, and was assiduous in flashing it upon every object within reach; but the moon outshone its light, making its beam look no more than a sort of magnified and exceedingly active glowworm.

Even the old stones of the market-place seemed a silver pavement in the lovely radiance of the Queen of Night, and the ivy leaves about the chimney were silver too.

All at once a figure, black and sinister, stole out from the shadow—a figure in slouched hat and long drooping cloak—a figure that, standing a moment in the centre of a patch of light, raised high its clasped

hands in one supreme gesture of despair, and then passed on with drooping head, while the sound of a sobbing moan made the group on the farther side of the pavement fall back a pace or two.

Said Jake, clutching the tanner convulsively: "It's Gabriel Devenant, poor chap!"

To which the latter, drawing a long breath, replied: "He had never much to boast of by way of a head-piece, and this blow has broke clean through what roofing there was. Lord be wi' him for a sorry fellow this night as needs comfort sorely."

"Amen," said Jake, and he meant the aspiration to do double duty, for he thought of the widow whose "little all" was lost, and of the tears she might be shedding even then, over the "three soles and the patch" lying sleeping in their little beds.

"Nay, though," thought Jake by way of amendment to this mental picture, "'patch' won't be sleeping; he'll be keeping watch with the mother, I'll go bail—aye, that will he—and trying his best to comfort her too."

Just as our little group was breaking up—for Amos saw a light glimmering in the gable, and knew that Bess was keeping vigil—and Jake, catching a gleam through the chink of the shop-shutter, felt an inward conviction that the boy Abel, in the scantiest attire, was at some game of unlawful delight—a sad lugubrious plaint broke upon the ear of night.

"Yon's Gaylad," said Matthew, "he's bayin' t'mune—dogs gonna abide t'mune."

"Nay, nay," said Farmer Dale, cramming his hat firmer on his head, preparatory to setting out home at a good round pace; "'taint t'moon as the creetur's bayin' at. He's keenin' over the wrong done this day. I tell thee, lad, them dumb beasts knows a deal more nor anyone as hasn't made a stody on 'em would be apt to fancy."

And truly it seemed as if the farmer was right; for, though a sudden cloud had come over the moon, and the stones in the market-place become commonplace paving-stones in lieu of a silver pavement, though the ivy-leaves showed grey and dead, and the watchman's lanthorn became as a "light to rule the night," the last sound that caught his ear as he reached the end of the street and struck out into the fields, was the keening of the dog who had been—so said the wiseacres—bewitched into unfaithfulness and a sluggardly disloyalty to his trust.

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